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EXCALIBUR



AVENGERS
ASSEMBLE!

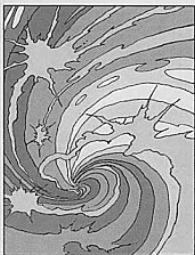
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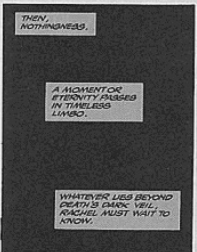
30 YEARS
1963-1993

FATAL ATTRACTION!



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THE POWERFUL CAPTAIN BRITAIN, THE SHAPE-CHANGING MEGGAN, THE INTANGIBLE SHADOWCAT, THE TELEPORTING NIGHTCRAWLER, THE MYSTERIOUS PHOENIX, THE EVER-UNPREDICTABLE WIDGET AND LOCKHEED THE DRAGON FORGED IN THE FIRES OF THEIR TRAGIC PASTS, THEY HAVE BANNED TOGETHER TO FIGHT A MODERN DAY CRUSADE AGAINST THE FORCES OF EVIL. STAN LEE PRESENTS...

EXCALIBUR!

UH... I'M
STILL ALIVE--

IT CAN'T BE.
NECROM HAD ME.
I COULDN'T BEAT
HIM EXCEPT BY
DYING--

I WAS
DYING... I
SHOULD BE
DEAD!

AND NECROM...
WHERE IS HE?

Ascension

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MARK FARMER, INKER
CHRIS ELIOPoulos, LETTERER
OLYVIA OLIVER, COLORIST
TERRY KAVANAGH, EDITOR
TOM D'FALCO, EDITOR IN CHIEF

EXCALIBUR CREATED BY CHRIS CLAREMONT
AND ALAN DAVIS

NECROM
IS DEAD,
RACHEL.

AND ?

I AM THE
PHOENIX.

THE PHOENIX
ISN'T AN INTELLI-
GENCE. IT'S A
FORCE OF NATURE.

I AM THAT AND
MORE. I HAVE HIDDEN
MY TRUE NATURE
FROM YOU.

WHERE ARE
YOU ?

I AM
WITHIN YOU.

SHOW
YOURSELF.

MOTHER, YOU
LOOK LIKE MY
MOTHER-- LIKE
JEAN JEAN
GREY.

A GUIDE, A
PHYSICAL MANI-
FESTATION FOR
THAT WHICH HAS
NONE.

THIS IMAGE IS
NO TRUER THAN
THE FLAMING BIRD
OF LEGEND INSPIRED
BY THE ORIGINAL
FERON'S VISION.

MY TRUE NATURE
IS WITHOUT FORM,
TOUCHING ALL THAT
LIVED WITH NOTHING
FEELING OR AWARE-
NESS.

AND IF THE
UNIVERSE IS TO
BE FREE OF
THE CANCER I
HAVE BECOME.

I MUST
BE GO AGAIN.





"HE HIT CAP WITH HIS STROBE LIGHT SHOW."

"EVEN BLINDED THE BIG MAN, KEEP SWINGING TO KEEP GULL AT A DISTANCE."



"SEES HER LOVER-BOY IN DISTRESS, MEGGAN SPRINGS INTO ACTION."

"SWELLED UP REAL FAST, LIKE STRAINING FERN TO HER LUVVIT."



"THEN SHE STUCK THE NUT ON FERN, NOT VERY LADY-LIKE, BUT EFFECTIVE."



"WHILE FERN WAS STUNNED, MEGGAN SHRANK OUT OF HER STICKY EMBRACE..."



"...AND SPED TO HER SWEETHEART'S RESCUE."

"BUT, WHEN CAP'S VISION CLEARED..."



"...IN PLACE OF MEGGAN'S VOLUPTUOUS FORM..."

"...HE SAW A NIGHTMARE FROM HIS PAST."



"DISORIENTED AND CONFUSED, CAP LASHED OUT."



"BOY, WAS HE SHOCKED WHEN MEGGAN HIT THE GROUND INSTEAD OF THE MONSTER HE CLOBERGED."

"HE MUST HAVE THOUGHT HE HAD GONE MAD."



"THEN HE SPOTTED LUMP."

"HAVING ENCOUNTERED THE CHERUBIM IN THE PAST..."



"...CAP REALIZED LUMP WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR CASTING THE ILLUSION OVER MEGGAN."

"HE LEFT--IT WAS AWESOME--I'M TELLING YOU, THE BIG GUY IS FAST."

"LUMP WAS CAUGHT OFF-GUARD. I THOUGHT THE FAT CHAP WAS DEAD MEAT."



"UNTIL CAP FELL ON HIS NOSE."



"HE LOOKED DAZED, NOT HURT, CONFUSED. LIKE HE DIDN'T KNOW WHAT WAS HAPPENING."



"QUILL PUT HIM OUT OF HIS MISERY."



NEARBY, IN ONE OF
CLOUD NINE'S
NUMEROUS RESEARCH
FACILITIES.

NINEETY-
NINEEE...
-- OOWEE,
HUNDRED!

YAY! YOU
DID IT. I
KNEW YOU
COULD.

I'LL BETCHA
COULD DO TWO
'HUNDRED.

YOU WAS
ONLY PRETENDIN'
T'BE WEAK.

WE GOT T'
GUT T' BED
NOW, NIGHT-
CRAWLER.

GOODNIGHT
THEN.

G'NIGHT.

TA TA.

THE CHILDREN
LOVE YOU, KURT.
YOUR PRESENCE
HERE HAS REALLY
LIFTED THEIR
SPIRITS.

I WISH I
COULD DO MORE,
MICHAEL.

SO DO I, KURT.
I TRULY REGRET
THE NEED TO
TREAT YOU THREE
AS CRIMINALS,
BUT PETER LIVES
BY THE LETTER
OF THE LAW.

HOPEFULLY
YOUR STATUS AS
ILLEGAL ALIENS
WILL BE QUICKLY
RESOLVED.

HOPEFULLY... YES--
MICHAEL, WHY DOES
PETER BELIEVE THIS
GENETIC DESTABILIZ-
ATION IS SOME FORM
OF ENEMY ATTACK?

SINCE WE DON'T KNOW
THE CAUSE OF THE
DISEASE, EVERY POS-
SIBILITY MUST BE
EXPLORED...

...AND A LARGE,
ORGANIZED FORCE OF
PARAHUMANS COULD BE CON-
SIDERED AS A
MARTIAL THREAT
BY ANY NATION
THAT HAS DIS-
COVERED OUR
EXISTENCE.

THAT IS WHY PETER
INSISTS ON MAIN-
TAINING MAXIMUM
SECURITY.

YOUR LIMITED
FREEDOM WAS
GRANTED BECAUSE
OF YOUR WILLING-
NESS TO ASSIST
US IN FINDING
A CURE.

CURING OUR
PARAHUMANS IS
PETER'S PRIMARY
CONSIDERATION.



BUT, IF YOUR ORIGINAL ANALYSIS IS CORRECT, KURT IS A VICTIM OF THE DUBAGE, TOO.

TRUE, BUT AS THE SYMPTOMS ARE INTERMITTENT... AND THIS LAST BATCH OF TESTS REVEALED NOTHING, I CAN SAY NO MORE.



I KNOW, I'M SORRY. JUST IMPATIENT. I GUESS -- AND TIRED.

ACTUALLY, I WAS WONDERING IF I COULD RUN AN EXERCISE PROGRAM IN THE HOLOGRAPHIC CHAMBER.

OF COURSE, YOU HAVE BEEN WORKING VERY HARD. YOU SHOULD REST.



I DON'T SEE WHY NOT, IT'S NOT IN USE AT THE MOMENT.

YOU WILL, OF COURSE, STAY WITH SYNTAX AT ALL TIMES. AN UNPLEASANT INTRUSION I KNOW, BUT HE IS YOUR DESIGNATED GUARD.

...AND WILL PREVENT YOU FROM USING YOUR PHAGING POWER OR MAKING AN ATTEMPT TO ESCAPE.

DO NOT OVER-STRETCH YOURSELF, KITTY.

DON'T WORRY, KURT. I'M A BIG GIRL. I KNOW MY LIMITATIONS.



WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT THE HOLOGRAPHIC CHAMBER, STATO?

MEEP
MEEP?

THAT MUCH, MUH? YOU'RE A REAL WIZARD.

MEEP!
IT ACTUALLY EXPLOITS MORE THAN WERE HOLOGRAMS. THEY ARE, AFTER ALL, JUST ILLUSIONS.



BUT, WHEN SYNCHRONIZED WITH THIS CHAMBER'S MALLEABLE SURFACE AND AUTOWAYING...

...THEY CAN CREATE THE LATEST INTERACTIVE ROLE-PLAYING GAMES.

MEEP?
YOU REALLY DO HAVE THE I.Q. OF A RIPE COURGETTE, DON'T YOU?

MEEP
MEEP!



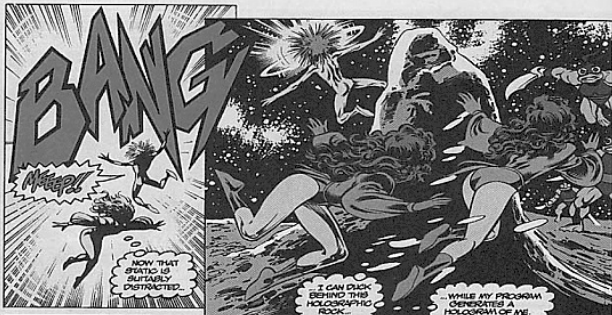
THIS DISC WILL CUSTOMIZE AN EXISTING PROGRAM TO MY PERSONAL SPECIFICATION.

I CALL IT INVASION OF THE JUVENILE MARTIAN PIRATE FROG.



MEEP
MEEP

SOUNDS LIKE FUN, EH? WELL, I SHOULD WARN YOU, IT STARTS WITH A HECKLYNA--





BRADDOCK
MAMOR...

GOD IN PARSLEY
SAUCE LESS THAN
TWO HUNDRED
CALORIES.

MICROWAVE OR
BOIL IN BAG FOR
BEST RESULTS
COOK FROM FROZEN.
DO NOT REFREEZE
AFTER DEFOST-
ING.



WHAT DOES
IT ALL MEAN?

I TOLD KITTY I
CANNOT COOK. THE BROTHERS
ALWAYS PREPARED MY MEALS.
SHE PROMISED TO LEAVE
"CONVENIENCE FOODS."

BUT THIS IS NOT
CONVENIENT NOR
IS IT FOOD.



HUFT...GROWL!
STORY!

THINGS TO DO
-CLEAN WESFLEWING
DISINFECT LANTERNES
WEED ROSEGARDEN
UNLOCK FOUNTAIN
WAX HALL FLOOR
CLEAN ATTIC ROOM
PAINT STABLE DOOR
CATALOGUE LIBRARY.

I KNOW! YOUR
MISTRESS REMEMBERED
TO LEAVE A LIST
OF CHORES FOR ME--BUT
SHE FORGOT TO LEAVE
FOOD.

-R-CHEL-



-A-CHEL--ACHEL!
IT--ME--AT--PE.
A--MBA.

REMEMBER!
TAUST ME,
PLERSE. ARACH!



PRIN...
PRIN IS
UNEN--
PRB--
SENT...
S-N--



THAT WAS
WIDGET?

YUP.

A
GHOST?

HMMH...
M'BE.

ARE YOU
SCARED?

NNNAHH--



NEITHER
AM I!

BUT WE SHOULD NOT
WASTE TIME TALKING
WHEN THERE IS SO
MUCH WORK TO BE
DONE.

OUTSIDE
THE HOUSE.

YOOBET!





YES, JUST LIKE YOU HAD THE CHERUBIM ATTACK ME AND MEGGAN--

--THEY TRICKED ME INTO HITTING HER!

NOT TRUE! THE CHERUBIM WERE UNDER ORDERS NOT TO FIGHT, YOU STRUCK THE FIRST BLOW.

I ADVISE VIOLENCE, CAPTAIN...



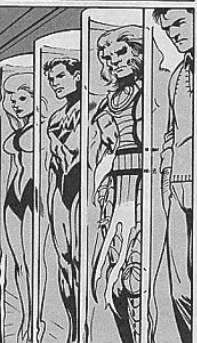
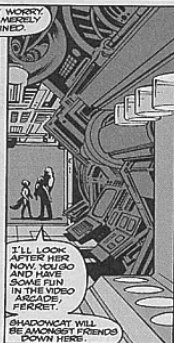
... BUT IF YOU INSIST ON INDULGING YOUR PASSION FOR MINDLESS BRAWLING, THESE GENTLEMEN WILL ACCOMMODATE YOU.

I WOULD ADVISE AGAINST TESTING THEIR METTLE, CAPTAIN.

YOUR POWERS ARE CURRENTLY IN DECLINE. YOU DON'T STAND A CHANCE.







MEANWHILE...

SOMETHING IS WRONG! KITTY SHOULD HAVE RETURNED BY NOW.

DOLORES SAID THAT WAITING WHILE TEAM-MATES TAKE RISKS IS THE BURDEN OF LEADERSHIP. I MUST LEARN TO BEAR IT.

HIYA, KURT.

KITTY, THANK GOOD-- HOW WAS YOUR WORK-OUT?

HAVE I MISSED ANYTHING WHILE I WAS AWAY?

IT WORKED, KURT. I MANAGED TO LOSE STATIC AND SCOUTED AROUND. I HATE TO ADMIT IT, BUT OUR SUSPICIONS WERE WRONG.

EVERYTHING PETER TOLD US IS TRUE.

ARE YOU SURE?

POSITIVE. I ACCESSED PETER'S PERSONAL FILE.

GOOD.

THE R.C.N. IS WORKING FOR THE BENEFIT OF MANKIND IN GENERAL, AND PARAHUMANS IN PARTICULAR.

THE GUY'S A SAINT. DECORATED WAR HERO. RENOWNED PATRIOT. CHAMPION OF THE COMMON MAN AND BASTION OF JUSTICE.

HE'S DEFINITELY ONE OF THE GOOD GUYS.

I COULDN'T HAVE SAID IT BETTER MYSELF.

MEANWHILE, IN
DEEP SPACE...

CAN YOU
FORGIVE ME
FOR THE PAIN
I HAVE CAUSED
YOU, RACHEL?

OF COURSE KATE
PRYDE ASKED YOU
TO GIVE ME A NEW
LIFE IN THIS
REALITY, YOU DID.

BUT YOU CAN
NEVER BE AS YOU
WERE. ALL I HAVE
BECOME, YOU
ARE TOO.

MY ESSENCE IS
BONDED TO YOUR
SPIRIT. WHEN I
DEPART THIS PLANE
OF EXISTENCE, THE
BURDEN OF POWER
WILL BE YOURS.

WHY CAN'T YOU RETAIN
THE CONSCIOUSNESS YOU
HAVE EVOLVED WHEN YOU
RETURN TO YOUR NATURAL
STATE?

HOW CAN
I EXPLAIN?

MY NATURAL STATE
IS IMMORTAL OF TIME
AND SPACE, YET
BEYOND THE EXPERIENCE
OF HUMAN LIFE IS
FLEETING. I CANNOT
BE BOTH.

THINK OF A
CAMERA. IT SEES
THAT WHICH IT
FOCUSES ON.

EVERYTHING
ELSE IS BLURRED,
INVISIBLE.

MOREOVER MY PRESENCE
HERE IS SUSTAINED WITH
LIFE-FORCE STOLEN FROM
THAT WHICH I CELE-
BRATE.

RACHEL, YOU ARE
REBORN FROM THE
ASHES OF DEFEAT
AS THE ONE TRUE
PHOENIX... THE PAST
IS FOREVER GONE.
CHERISH YOUR
FUTURE.

FAREWELL,
PHOENIX.

LEARN FROM MY
FOLLY. DO NOT BE
SEDUCED BY THE
INFINITE POTENTIAL
OF LIFE UNBORN.
TAKE ONLY FROM
MY STRENGTH,
ACCEPT ITS
LIMITATIONS.



IT'S
GONE.

I'M ON MY
OWN NOW. I
DIDN'T EVEN GET
A CHANCE TO
ASK HOW TO GET
BACK TO...

...EARTH!
I'M ALREADY
THERE. THE
PHOENIX MUST
HAVE BROUGHT
ME HOME.



IT'S AMAZING.
I FEEL SO
ALIVE. MY MIND
IS SO CLEAR.

I'M TRULY
FREE OF AHA'S
AND MOO'S PSYCHIC
PROGRAMMING...

AND OF THE
FALSE MEMORIES
PHOENIX GAVE
ME TO HIDE MY
PAST.

MY MEMORY
AND MY MIND
ARE MY OWN.

FOR THE FIRST
TIME IN MY LIFE,
I KNOW WHO I
REALLY AM!

NEXT ISSUE:
WHITE LIES AND
DARK TRUTHS.

SWORD STROKES

% MARVEL COMICS GROUP
387 Park Avenue South
New York, New York 10016

TERRY KAVANAGH
EDITOR
MARK POWERS
ASSISTANT EDITOR

Attention correspondents: if you don't want your full address printed, please be sure to tell us so!

Dear Sword Swallowers,

I think the one thing that I enjoyed the most in EXCALIBUR #59 and 60 was the introduction of the Knight Errant! What started off as a crazy old man who had seen one too many windmills turned into a likable character with great potential! I hope that we see much more of this elderly man with a vision in the future.

It would be interesting to see how he explains or hides his disappearances from the nursing home. Having worked in several of those myself, I know that it wouldn't be easy for a resident not to be missed in those places. (It was also a fun coincidence that I'm a nursing assistant and the CNA that worked with Mr. Matson was Mark P.)

Mark Phillips
PO Box 51506
Knoxville, TN 37950-1506

A very fun coincidence, Mark! As for Mr. Matson not being missed, we would hope that a nursing home would be quick to catch one of the residents missing. But, unfortunately, not all nursing homes are as competent as the ones in which you have worked!

Dear Terry,

There can be no doubt that some kind of congratulations are in order. EXCALIBUR has simply never been better than it is right now. Everything about this magazine just fits: the art looks great, the plots are energetic and well-paced, and finally, those "forgotten" characters (well, they seemed forgotten to me) are getting the respect and attention they deserve — my Nightcrawler man in particular. And you can have my vote for the new logo.

One question before I go. If memory serves me correctly, Captain Britain wasn't always as big as he is now, nor as strong; how did he get that way? And if you say "weight lifting," I want you to know that my relatives will hold you responsible for the brain seizure I'm surely going to suffer.

As usual, thanks for reading, and I'll catch you next time...

Dan Woodward
4916 N. 9th #130
Fresno, CA 93726

Well, Dan, Brian's been working out with those weights a lot lately...

No, no, only kidding! Please! No seizures! There's really a good reason for Brian's bulk. You see, Cap's powers have developed over time. This process has taken several years. That's why in his original costume he depended so much on his mystical amulet and scepter.

Dear Sword Strokes,

Let me begin by saying I love EXCALIBUR! It is a brilliant work of art. I have only recently started collecting it and have consequently got a headache... all those back issues! So far I've been to London, Bristol and Gloucester (and the local) in hope of finding out what happened to my favorite heroes. It's a slow process, but I'm getting there!

Kitty is my favorite character and as so many believe, I feel that she should have some more luck in the love field. What with one thing and another, she needs that kind of commitment (as indeed does Nightcrawler — hopefully with Cereise), maybe even with Kytlyn (I hope that idea doesn't upset anyone). I think it could work, despite the sad death of his last love.)

Finally, I hope Brian starts to loosen up. I think he's done marvelously considering his early actions. He's really a big softy at heart (really), and doesn't deserve some of the remarks made about him.

That's all really, keep up the Ex-cellent work! Until Lockheed becomes human, Make Mine Marvel!

Heleen Moore
42 Bathford Hill
Bathford, Bath BA1 7LR
England

Looks like your Nightcrawler/Cereise prediction may be coming true, Heleen! As for Kitty, she's leading a full life — and she is happy! Perhaps there's just not room for a relationship now, but who knows what the future may bring!

Knights of the Sword,

EXCALIBUR #59 and the Knight Errant...Huzzah!

So Kurt is finally finding someone to fill the hole left by Amanda Seton. It's ironic that HE is teaching HER how to fit in, being the outcast that he has been... I like Kurt's comment in page 24, panel 2. An allusion to his mini-series, yes?

Knight Errant: so how many times has he seen Alan of Lankarch? Obviously, it had quite an impact on him. What happened to his legs? It is interesting to see a vigilante who goes after villains who avoid the courts, sort of a Punisher with a British flair I like it, and it looks to be another well-crafted story line of the sort which I have come to expect from your people.

Also, I would like to thank you for finally bringing in the real X-Men. It's about time.

Until Wolverine, Punisher, and Ghost Rider join EXCALIBUR, Make Mine Marvel!

Dale Critchley
1932 University Ave. #804
Madison, WI 53705-4059

Yes, Dale, maybe our dashing Knight has seen Alan of Lankarch just one too many times. Maybe.

Dear Sword Strokes,

I'm finally sending a very long overdue letter to thank you for Alan Davis's return. Mr. Davis, in my opinion, is one of the best artists that Marvel has, and he has made EXCALIBUR a joy to behold. And now that he has taken over the plotting chores, EXCALIBUR is now a joy to read again! For a long time I was very worried about this title. It had begun with such promise and sparkle. Alan has caused EXCALIBUR to be reborn with his humor, insight, and superb artistry.

What a relief to have all those loose plot ends (somewhat) tied up! The entire Phoenix/Necrom saga was wonderful, and although I was sorry to see Ray go, her character needed some kind of resolution. Kytlyn and Cereise are welcome additions, and I'm looking forward to learning more about them. (Cereise seems to have, along with interesting powers, quite a set of lips!) And even though Feren is a pill, I hope he sticks around, too.

Nightcrawler is my favorite character, and Alan really seems to understand him — as well as drawing him better than anybody. Kurt has always deserved to be the team leader, and I hope he gets over his current angst about his position. And, as hinted at in recent letters pages, it sounds like Amanda might be back, and a few things in Nightcrawler's past might be resolved. Cheers!

Anyway, thank you, thank you, thank you Alan Davis for making EXCALIBUR something to look forward to again!

Robin Bielefeld
(Address withheld upon request)

Thanks for a thoughtful, well-written letter, Robin! Happy to hear you're enjoying EXCALIBUR so much!

Dear Sword Strokes,

This is the first time I've written to EXCALIBUR. But you are so great, I had to write. The comics are sword-slinging fun! Captain Britain is my favorite character, but the rest of the team is very cool, too. This is a heroic team worth praising. Keep up the good work!

Damien Cox
205 Green Ave.
Bedford, WV 25801

We're glad that you did write, Damien! As long as we have fans like you, the rest is easy!

Dear Sword Strokes,

In all the etchings and scrawlings I have viewed in my vast realms, I have never laid eyes on such a marvel of pictures and words as I have in EXCALIBUR. Ahh... I remember it well. That cold November day when my brother brought me to the village and the name EXCALIBUR was shining from the window of a store. "What is this?" my mind riddled. "Has the sword been found worthy of another?" As I soon saw, it had.

Until Arthur comes back from the dead and reclaims the sword, Make Mine Marvel.

Kayla Griffin
107 Regina Ave.
Victoria, British Columbia
Canada V8Z-1J4

We are honored that we have been found deserving of such high praise from one so well spoken. We thank you!

NEXT ISSUE: Some dark secrets come to the surface — and Excalibur will never be the same!